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## *Early Fall*

Many times, a small amount of forward-thinking proactivity eventually pays off big. There are great deals on Christmas lights in January. Booking a flight months in advance is less expensive than airline tickets for a next-day flight.

In addition to simply saving money, advanced planning saves time and energy while improving the final result. Furnaces and swimming pools are best installed before they are planned to be used. In the world of your lawn and landscape, proactivity is especially important.

Living plants all have their own unique timelines when it comes to establishing themselves. Being mindful of your landscape's relative timelines prevents you from ever needing to play "catch-up." This goes for trees, shrubs and flowers as well as your turf. In this issue, we talk about how aeration and overseeding in the closing months of this growing season can lead to a vibrant and green spring next year.

## CREATING ROOM FOR NEW GROWTH

A cluttered home, office, or workshop makes comfort and productivity difficult. Over the course of the growing season, your lawn can become overcrowded as well. The late summer and early fall are great times to use aeration to make some space in your lawn while encouraging new growth with overseeding.



When you aerate and overseed your lawn in the fall, you're making an efficient and effective investment in the future of your turf.



### LOOSEN UP

Healthy and expansive root growth leads to the lush, green lawn that you love. As the shorter days of fall slow down the growth of grass blades, your lawn focuses the bulk of its energy toward root development.

The process of aeration removes thousands of small plugs of soil from your lawn's surface. By perforating your soil, aeration creates valuable space for roots to expand throughout the autumn months. Over the summer, the

upper layers of soil can become dried out and compacted. Sometimes, there is a buildup of thatch as well. In addition to creating space for new roots, aeration loosens up a compact lawn, allowing easier access for air and water to nourish your turf. Aeration is one of the best things that you can do to help build a strong and resilient lawn. Rather than a "quick fix," aeration helps establish turf areas that are in it for the long haul. You may not see results this fall, but next spring's lush, green lawn will reflect the steps you take now.

### SOWING NEW SEEDS

Fall is the best time for new plantings. This goes for trees and shrubs as well as turfgrass. The milder temperatures of autumn allow newly planted landscaping to establish itself before winter dormancy. In addition to brand-new plantings, fall is a great time to fortify existing turf areas by overseeding. Spreading seed throughout your lawn increases the amount of viable turf plants per square foot, resulting in a thick lawn that resists potential weed invasions.



When aeration is followed by overseeding, the benefits are amplified by the increased soil-to-seed contact which results from having your lawn "opened up." When it comes to long-term benefits for your turf, timing matters. When you aerate and overseed your lawn in the fall, you're making an efficient and effective investment in the future of your turf.

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## CARING FOR "BABY" LAWNS

This time of year is the best time to establish new turf areas from seed. In their infancy, new lawns need extra care and attention if they are to mature into healthy and vital turf areas.

First and foremost, new lawns require vigilant watering. The soil of a new turf area should be kept moist at all times if possible. Turf seedlings are very vulnerable to heat and should never be exposed to extremely dry conditions. This usually means at least two watering sessions per day: one early in the morning and another in the later afternoon. Midday watering, during the day's hottest hours, should be avoided.

In addition to watering, new lawns benefit greatly from fertilization. "Starter" fertilizers with high relative concentrations of potassium and phosphorus are best for getting a new lawn up and running. Fertilizers that contain too much nitrogen can actually damage new lawns in certain conditions.



Finally, in a matter of weeks, your new turf will grow to a point that mowing seems necessary. As the grass is establishing itself, you should wait until it is at least 4 inches tall before the first mowing. When you do mow, be sure to set your blades to the highest setting. Grass blades fuel root growth, so it's important to not remove too much via mowing. With the proper care and attention, your brand-new lawn will fill in this fall and be ready for a vibrant season next year.

## LABOR DAY

Labor Day normally signals school resuming, the start of football season and the beginning of our trees turning color, but 2020 thus far has not been normal! Lawn care professionals view Labor Day as the best time of the year to begin lawn repairs. We are often asked what are the best practices when it comes to rejuvenating an old, tired lawn. Below I have identified the three most popular procedures we use to improve turf quality and density. I have proclaimed for over 30 years: "The best defense against crabgrass, broadleaf weeds and insect damage is a thick canopy of grass!"

- 1) Core aeration is described in detail on our cover page, and it is recommended for lawns with high quality turf.
- 2) Core aeration and overseeding are recommended for lawns that have bare or thin areas smaller than a dinner plate. Typically, we aerate twice if you plan to overseed along with your fall aeration.
- 3) Slice seeding or topdressing and overseedings are designed for lawns that are renovation candidates. Complete lawn makeovers are usually reserved for clients who want to change grass varieties or improve soil conditions. The key to any successful seed job is seed/soil contact and timing. Labor Day may signal the start of school or football season to you, but to the Buckeye EcoCare professionals, it is the start of planting season.

As always, please consult with your route manager on best practices for upgrading your lawn this fall. Our office numbers are listed below.

**CONTACT US TODAY! [CustomerService@BuckeyeEcoCare.com](mailto:CustomerService@BuckeyeEcoCare.com)**

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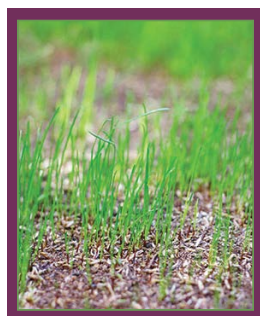


*Mark T. Grunkemeyer  
CEO, Buckeye EcoCare*

## CARING FOR THE YOUTH

As we talked about earlier, fall is the ideal time for new plantings. Seeding a new turf area in the fall allows it the greatest chance for success, but it is very important that it get off on the right foot. Here are a few tips to follow which will keep your new lawn beautiful and healthy:

**CAREFUL WATERING:** Watering is a delicate prospect with brand-new seed. The trick is to keep the newly seeded soil perpetually moist while not disrupting or moving the seeds themselves.



**NOT TOO MUCH:** Overwatering or heavy rains can produce runoff that washes away new seeds, or they can create mud that drowns the would-be turf. Gentle sprinkling every day for the first 2 to 3 weeks is recommended. After that time, you can gradually taper off the frequency of watering as the turf gets more and more established. One inch of irrigation or rainfall per week is all the water that your new seedlings need.

**PROPER MOWING:** Mowing should only be performed once 3 to 4 inches of growth are present. The first mowings should only remove roughly half an inch of the blade.